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ABSTRACT

THE FOLLOWING IS THE FULL TEXT OF THIS DOCUMENT: Two elements in particular appear to be common to effective schools: high expectations for student achievement on the part of school staff members, and strong instructional leadership on the part of the school principal or another staff member. Other elements that are common to a significant number of effective schools include: Well-defined school goals and emphases; staff training on a schoolwide basis; control by staff over instructional and training decisions; a sense of order; a system for monitoring student progress; good discipline. In addition, private schools with high student achievement have good attendance, assign more homework, offer a strong academic program, and emphasize high standards. Schools that are safe for students also stress academic excellence and program improvement, and have strong leadership. However, schools should not blindly accept or attempt to institute all of the characteristics associated with effective schools. The studies undertaken thus far have not been longitudinal, nor have they concentrated on other than urban elementary schools that already have successful programs. In some schools, structural or procedural factors may simply preclude the successful implementation of certain characteristics. While one approach to improving achievement is based on a highly structured model that imposes change from higher levels of administration, most successful change results from collaborative efforts that involve schoolwide reforms, the participation of staff members on all levels, and a focus on the overall culture of the individual school. Resource Information Service (RIS) provides ASCD members access to research and sources of information on selected topics. The information is available through RIS-sponsored research syntheses, the RIS column in "Update," and the quarterly publication "Curriculum Update." (Author)

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Highlights from Research on Effective Schools

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- Well-defined school goals and emphases
- Staff training on a schoolwide basis
- Control by staff over instructional and training decisions
- A sense of order
- A system for monitoring student progress
- Good discipline.

In addition, private schools with high student achievement have good attendance, assign more homework, offer a strong academic program, and emphasize high standards. Schools that are safe for students also stress academic excellence and program improvement, and have strong leadership.

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